PS 1729
.G5 Z8
Copy 1

WILLIAM DAVIS GALLAGHER

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

—BY—

W. H. VENABLE.

"I have recently had a letter from dear old Gallagher—your western Whittier. What a noble face his photograph discloses."

E. C. STEADMAN.

PS1729
.G528

WILLIAM DAVIS GALLAGHER.

By W. H. Venable.

William Davis Gallagher, poet, editor, and public official, was born in Philadelphia, August 21, 1808. His father, Bernard Gallagher, familiarly called "Barney," was an Irishman, a Roman Catholic, a participant in the rebellion that, in 1803, cost Robert Emmett his life. "Barney" Gallagher migrated to the United States, landing at the city of brotherly love, where, by the aid of John Binns, editor of the "Shamrock," he obtained work. Some time afterward he became acquainted with Miss Abigail Davis, of Bridgeport, New Jersey, who had been sent to Philadelphia by her widowed mother, to complete, at Quaker school, an education begun at home. "Abbey" Davis was the daughter of a Welsh farmer, who, volunteering in the Revolutionary War, lost his life under Washington at Valley Forge. The Irish refugee and the Welsh patriot's daughter were so much attracted to each other that they joined their lives in wedlock. Four sons, Edward, Francis, William and John were the issue of this marriage. The third was a child not eight years old when the father died. On his death-bed Bernard Gallagher refused to confess to his ministering priest the secrets of Free Masonry, which order he had joined, and the church not only refused him burial in consecrated grounds, but also condemned his body to be exposed to public derision in front of his own door; and the execution of this sentence was prevented by application for police interference. This was in 1814.

Two years after her husband's death, Mrs. Gallagher and her four sons, joining a small "Jersey Colony," removed west, crossing the mountains in a four-horsed and four-belled wagon of the old time, and floating down the Ohio River from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati in

a strongly built and well-provided flat-boat of the period. The boy William amused himself during the whole "river voyage" by fishing out of the window of the boat. "I was sorry," said he, "when the boat landed and put an end to my fun."

The widow and her family located on a farm near Mount Healthy, now Mount Pleasant, Hamilton county, in the neighborhood of the Carys. Mrs. Gallagher and the mother of Alice and Phœbe Cary were near of kin, and the children of the two families were, of course, intimate.

Young William was put to work by his mother and his uncle at the various tasks a country lad is expected to do. In winter he went to school in a log school house. The teacher's name was Samuel Woodworth, whose scholars always addressed him as "Sir" Woodworth, such was the law of manners and the dignity of the preceptor's office in those days. Under guidance of "Sir" Woodworth, Master Gallagher grew familiar with the literary treasures of the "American Reader," and the "Columbian Orator." The boy was fond of these books, and still more enamored of the rosy-cheeked girls of Mount Healthy. Envious rivals taunted him by calling him "girl-boy," and the jeer caused fist-fights and bleeding noses. Not even the charms of the bare-footed maidens at spelling school "worked with such a spell" on "Billy" (for that was his nickname), as did the attractions of the woods. What so seductive to the natural boy as the unfenced forest? What so much coveted as freedom to ramble over the hills and far away? Gallagher's ruling instinct, in boyhood and manhood, was admiration of nature — especially love of woodland scenery. His young feet trod every hill and valley about Mount Healthy and along Mill creek, whose remembered banks he long after celebrated as "Mahketewa's Flowery Marge." Well did he know the wild flowers and native birds. He plucked spicy grapes, or luscious pawpaws, in season, and gathered hoards of hickory nuts to crack by the winter fire. In summer weather, he found hidden

springs, and traced wandering brooks from source to mouth.

One day the prepossessing boy, with his cheerful, ruddy face, was observed by a Mrs. Graham, of Clermont county, Ohio, who was visiting at Mount Healthy. Mrs. Graham was so much pleased with "Billy" that she begged his mother to allow him to return to Clermont county with her, and live there for a time and do "chores." "Want my boy?" said the widow mother, with tears of protest. Yet, on reflection, she consented to the proposal, and William went with the lady to Clermont county, where, for perhaps a year, he worked at "Graham's Mill." After his return home he resumed farm-work on the place of David Jessup. The toil was hard, but relief was found in stolen escapes to the woods; or to Cummins' tan-yard, where some pet bears were kept; or to Spring Grove, where was a herd of tame buffaloes. Sometimes he was sent to Irving's mill, and while waiting for his grist he would sit under a certain tree, which to-day stands within the enclosure of Spring Grove cemetery, and read one of his few books, usually the "Columbian Orator."

The routine of the youth's drudgery was broken by the thoughtful interest of his oldest brother Edward, who, visiting the Jessup farm, saw that William was working "like a nigger," as he expressed it, and insisted that the boy should be put to school. A consultation of mother, brother and uncle was held, and it was decided that Billy should go to town and attend the Lancastrian Seminary, he promising not to waste time by truancy in the woods or along the alluring shores of the Ohio. The Lancastrian Seminary, conducted by Edmund Harrison, was opened in March, 1815. George Harrison, one of the sons of the principal, took a kindly interest in the ingenuous country boy, and gave him an opportunity, while yet a student in the school, to learn to "set type," in the office of a small paper called *The Remembrancer*, edited by Rev. David Root, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church. The paper was printed at a small office in a building up "old

post-office alley," west of Main Street, between Third and Fourth Streets. Here Gallagher received his first lessons in the printer's art and in proof-reading. The most puzzling part of the work was to understand and correct the *poetry*, which seemed, to the embryo editor, absurd for the reason that it was not written in prose. "I wondered," said he, referring to this experience after a lapse of sixty years, "why the stupid contributors didn't put what they had to say plainly, instead of cutting it up ridiculously, in short lines, with capitals at one end and rhymes at the other."

In 1826 Hon. James W. Gazlay started an agricultural paper called *The Western Tiller*, and young Gallagher was employed as general assistant in its management. Not only did he attend to the mechanical department, but he also ventured to write, and became so expert with the pen that, on occasion, Gazlay left him in charge of the paper, jokingly declaring that "Billy" had superseded him as editor.

Mr. Gazlay disposed of *The Tiller* in 1828 to Wm. J. Ferris, and Gallagher's services were then engaged, for a time, by Mr. S. J. Brown, proprietor of the Cincinnati *Emporium*, a newspaper founded in 1824. Brown was personally remarkable for his lisping, and he often boasted that he was "thole editor of the Thinthinnati *Emporium*." Gallagher's connection with the *Emporium* was brief. His next newspaper experience was with the *Commercial Register*, the first daily in Cincinnati. This journal, edited by Morgan Neville and published by S. S. Brooks, survived only six months. While engaged on the *Register*, Gallagher was requested by his brother Francis to take part in the joint production of a new literary periodical. With precipitate zeal the brothers plunged into the enterprise, and the *Western Minerva* was born almost as soon as conceived. This new daughter of Jove was named in the classical style of the time, and after an eastern magazine then flourishing. The *Western Minerva*, notwithstanding

its divine name, died in about a year, and hardly deserves an epitaph. In the year 1824 Mr. John P. Foote published the *Literary Gazette,* for which W. D. Gallagher wrote his first verses. He was then only sixteen, and the tripping "Lines on Spring," which he sent through the mail to Mr. Foote, were signed "Julia."

On January 1, 1826, F. Burton began to publish the Cincinnati *Saturday Evening Chronicle,* with Benjamin F. Drake as editor. Mr. Gallagher wrote for the *Chronicle,* under the pseudonym "Rhoderick," and his friend, Otway Curry, contributed to it also, signing his articles "Abdallah."

In the summer of 1828, Gallagher, not yet of age, went to Mt. Sterling, Kentucky, to visit his brother John, who attended school there. A violent contest for the governorship was raging between the Whig candidate, David Merriwether, "Old Stone-Hammer," and the fierce Democratic orator, W. T. Barry, one of Clay's respected forensic rivals. Gallagher espoused the Whig cause by writing for a party newspaper conducted at Mt. Sterling by Weston F. Birch. While meditating editorials, laudatory of "Old Stone-Hammer," the sojourning knight of the goose-quill received intelligence that his brother Francis was lying ill at Natchez. William bought a horse and rode from Mount Sterling to Louisville; thence, by steamboat, he completed the journey to Natchez. The horse-back trip through Kentucky was crowded with incident. One evening the traveler came to the gate of a large house, which a black servant told him belonged to General James Taylor. The General was not at home, but his wife, a stately lady, very hospitably invited the young stranger to dismount and rest awhile under her roof. The black slave put the horse in the stable, and the bashful rider followed the courteous southern matron into the big house, and was there treated to a glass of "Metheglin," mixed by her own fair hands. Pursuing his further adventures, the romantic "Rhoderick," arrived at Ashland and announced himself as a

"Young Whig from Ohio," who desired to pay his respects to Henry Clay. The distinguished "Harry of the West" came out and cordially greeted the pilgrim, and asked him to stay all night, but the honor was gracefully declined.

Passing through Louisville he saw, where now the finest part of the city is built, a swampy wildernes, populous with beaver. The open-eyed traveler observed everything, and wrote from Mississippi a series of descriptive letters for the *Chronicle*. These were read by many, and their author was talked about as a smart young fellow, worthy to be encouraged. One of the first to recognize his talents and speak in his praise was the educator, Milo G. Williams. Gallagher returned to Cincinnati to find himself quite a local lion. Doubtless, the people thought still better of him when it was known he had saved a few dollars by self-denial, and that he was desirous of securing for his mother a home of her own. He bought a ground lot of Nicholas Longworth, the eccentric pioneer millionaire, but had not the means to build a house. "See here, Billy," suggested Mr. Longworth, "I want you to build a house for your mother; now, can you raise money enough to buy the lumber? Get the lumber, and I will build the house, and you may pay me when you are able." The offer was accepted; the house was built, and paid for in easy payments. The house was situated on the north side of Fourth street, between "Western Row," now Central avenue, and John street, and overlooked the sloping plain that lay between the bluff on which it stood and the Ohio river, and the mouth of Mill creek; and took in, most picturesquely and charmingly, what is now the town plot of Covington, and the beautiful hills of Ludlow, one of which was crowned with the celebrated Carneal House, or "Egyptian Hall."

We have seen that Gallagher was an enthusiastic Whig and a worshipper of Clay. It is not strange that, in 1830, he was persuaded by some of the prominent Whigs of Green county to cast his fortunes on the hazard of a "tooth-and-

toe-nails" campaign newspaper, at Xenia, Ohio. Even the mother's new house was sold to provide an outfit for a small printing office, and, in a short time, the *Backwoodsman* was issued, a sheet devoted generally to hurrahing for Clay and specially to using up Jimmy Gardner, editor of the Jackson organ of Xenia. Gallagher was elated to see his first leader copied in the *National Journal*, and to learn that Clay himself had read it with approval. In the course of the campaign a banquet was given to the Ashland hero, at Yellow Springs, Ohio, on which occasion the modest editor of the *Backwoodsman* was surprised and abashed on finding that the committee of arrangements had trapped him into a seat just opposite the great statesman, who, it appears, requested to have an opportunity of talking with "that bright young man from Xenia who writes so well."

All this was pleasant enough; but the *Backwoodsman* despite its cleverness, was doomed to fail with the failing political fortunes of its idol. The man who "would rather be right than be President" was not chosen President, and consequently Gallagher's labor of love was lost, and with it all his money and much of his self-confidence.

One of the pleasant incidents of Gallagher's life at Xenia took place in the office of the *Backwoodsman* in the summer of 1830. One day a gentleman called and asked to see the editor. The printer's devil ran up stairs where Gallagher was at work, and gave the message: "A man down there wants to see you; he says his name is Prentice." He of the *Backwoodsman*, in a flurry, would brush up and wash his inky hands before presenting himself to the late editor of the *New England Review*, but George shouts from below, "Never mind black fingers!" and the next minute the two young journalists meet and join hands. Prentice was on his way to Lexington to prepare his "Life of Clay."

By far the most important event of Mr. Gallagher's life at Xenia was his marriage to Miss Emma Adamson, a daughter of Captain Adamson, of Boston.

Some brilliant worldly expectations had been built on the assumption that Clay would be President; and when the campaign ended in disappointment, the newly wedded pair knew not which way to look for a living. Just about this dark time it came into the mind of John H. Wood, a Cincinnati book-seller, to start a literary paper in connection with his business, and he invited Gallagher to take editorial charge of it at a guaranteed salary. The offer was accepted gladly, and, turning over the care of the fast-expiring *Backwoodsman* to Francis, William took stage with his pretty wife and hastened to Cincinnati, and presently began his first important literary labor, the management of the *Cincinnati Mirror*. This was the fourth literary periodical published west of the Alleghany mountains. Its prototype, the *New York Mirror*, was a well established and influential journal. The new paper, a quarto, excellently printed on good paper, and of attractive appearance, was issued semi-monthly. The first two volumes were edited by Gallagher solely. At the beginning of the third year Gallagher formed a partnership with Thomas H. Shreve, and the two became proprietors of the publication. It was enlarged and issued weekly under the name *Cincinnati Mirror and Western Gazette of Literature*. In April, 1835, the *Chronicle*, then owned by Rev. James H. Perkins, was merged in the *Mirror*, and Perkins shared the editorship of the periodical. The concern was sold October, 1835, to James B. Marshall, who united with it a publication called the *Buckeye*, and named it the *Buckeye and Cincinnati Mirror*. Within three months Marshall sold out to Flash and Ryder, book-sellers on Third Street, who engaged Gallagher and Shreve to resume control of the once more plain *Cincinnati Mirror*. All now went on smoothly until Gallagher offended Mr. Ryder by refusing to print matter endorsing Tom Paine's irreligious views. A quarrel followed, and both Gallagher and Shreve resigned. They were succeeded by J. Reese Fry, who, though he had fair editorial ability, could not

prevent the *Mirror* from sinking to final extinction within two months.

The *Mirror* never paid its way, though it had an extensive circulation in the Mississippi valley. Its contents embraced original and selected tales, essays, poetry, biographical and historical sketches, reviews of and extracts from new books, and a compendium of the news of the day. Nearly all the leading western writers contributed to it. Among these were Timothy Flint, J. A. McClung, John B. Dillon, Harvy D. Little, Morgan Neville, Benjamin Drake, Mrs. Julia Dumont and Mrs. Lee Hentz. From the east, Mr. Whittier contributed at least one poem—"Lines on a Portrait."

When, in 1832, Mr. Gallagher held this literary "Mirror" up to nature and art on the banks of the Ohio, Bryant was but thirty-eight years old, Longfellow and Whittier but twenty-five, Poe twenty-one, and Howells lacked five years of being born. The backwoods editor's comments on cotemporary literature read curiously in the light of present reputations. Encouraging mention is made of a fifty-dollar prize story, "A New England Sketch, by Miss Beecher, of this city." The reviewer says the story "is written with great sprightliness, humor and pathos," and that "none but an intelligent and observant lady could possibly have written it." In a notice of "Mogg Megone," Whittier is discriminatingly heralded as a "man whom his countrymen will yet delight to honor. Some of his early writings are among the happiest juvenile productions with which we are acquainted." The complacent editor mentions "Outre Mer" favorably, saying that it was written by Professor Longfellow, "who is very well known to American readers," and that "it is for sale at Josiah Drake's bookstore on Main street."

Mr. Gallagher wrote much for the *Mirror* in prose and verse, and his editorials, sketches and poems were widely copied. One of his pieces, a carefully finished short essay, entitled "The Unbeliever," was credited to

Dr. Chalmers, and appeared in a school reader with that classic divine's name attached.

While editor of the *Mirror*, Gallagher made his debut as a speaker, by delivering before the "Lyceum," an "Eulogium on the Life and Character of William Wirt." The old Enon Church, where the "Lyceum" met, was crowded, and the orator, when he rose to speak, was so frightened that he could not at first open his mouth, but the reassuring smile of the president, Doctor Daniel Drake, restored his self-command, and the address was pronounced satisfactorily.

The "Lyceum" was a society for popular edification, conducted under the auspices of the Ohio Mechanics' Institute. Before it, Calvin E. Stowe delivered a course of lectures on the "History of Letters," and Judge James Hall read an address on the "Importance of Establishing a First-Class Library in Cincinnati."

The old Enon Church, on Walnut street, was also the meeting place of a club called the "Franklin Society," the members of which, we are told, "met week after week, with much benefit to all concerned." "Many a cold and cheerless evening," wrote the editor of the *Western Quarterly*, "have we seen half a dozen enthusiastic youths gathered about and shivering over the stove in the corner of the large apartment, while the President, wrapped in dignity and a large cloak, sat chattering his teeth, apart from the group, and member after member stepped aside and made speeches, many of which were distinguished by brilliancy and true eloquence."

A more popular debating society was the "Inquisition," mentioned in Channing's "Memoir of James H. Perkins." The "Inquisition" was attended by the beauty and fashion of Cincinnati. Mr. Gallagher shone with the young gentry who read polite essays at Dr. Drake's parlors, and shivered with the talented plebeians of the Franklin society. He was also the very soul of a unique private junto numbering but eight members, and named the Tags, or the T. A. G.

S., these cabalistic letters being the initials of the four who originated the conclave, namely, Frederic William Thomas, Samuel York Atlee, William Davis Gallagher and Thomas Henry Shreve.

Still another very interesting club may be referred to here, though it arose somewhat later than those mentioned. It was called the "Forty-Twos," from the circumstance that, at its founding, all of its members were over forty-one years of age and under forty-three. The "Forty-Twos" met in the law office of Salmon P. Chase, on Third street, (the office in which Don Piatt says the Republican party was born.) Among its members, besides Chase and Gallagher, were Samuel Eels, Jordan A. Pugh, and Charles L. Telford. The club was larger than that of the "Tags," and had more of a social nature, but it did a great deal in the way of developing a literary taste in Cincinnati.

It was before the appearance of the *Mirror* that W. D. Gallagher won his first laurels for poetical achievement. Some verses of his called "The Wreck of the Hornet," published anonymously, went the rounds of the American press, and were ascribed to the pen of Bryant. The success of this fugitive piece gave its author confidence to produce others, and he was soon recognized as the leading imaginative writer of the West.

In the spring of 1835 he published a little book of thirty-six pages, entitled "Erato No. I.," dedicated to Timothy Flint. The naming of his collection after a lyric muse was suggested, probably, by the example of Percival, who a dozen years before, had put forth "Clio No. I." and "Clio No. II." Gallagher's maiden venture was received with favor; and, in August, 1835, "Erato No. II." was issued, and this was followed, two years later, by "Erato No. III." A long and laudatory review of these three booklets appeared in the *Southern Literary Messenger* for July, 1838. The reviewer says: "It is to be regretted that, in justice to the poet, these volumes were not published in one of the Atlantic cities, inasmuch as it would have

extended the reputation of the author, and given currency to his works, which a Western press can not secure to them. The Atlantic side of the Alleghanies is sufficiently controlled by that kind of prejudice in relation to ultramontane literature, that led one, some two thousand years ago, to say, 'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?' These prejudices should not be neglected or despised by Western writers. The names of Messrs. Harper & Brothers, or Carey, Lea & Blanchard, on the title page of many a book has often proved a better endorsement to the public than the author's. How natural it is to condemn a book unread that has the imprint of a country town. There is the same kind of faith extended to an unknown book as to an unknown bank note; if it bears city names, and is of a city bank, it is received with confidence, and if it is a country bill it is taken with hesitation and suspicion." The alleged Eastern prejudice to Western literary outputs was met by Gallagher with obstinate provincial pride and defiance. To him the building up of Western literature was a duty which he exalted to the rank of patriotism and religion. He advocated the fostering of home genius with a fervor like that which protectionists manifested in discussing domestic industries. Instead of seeking Eastern publishers, Gallagher did not even comply with their voluntary requests to handle his books, though this was owing, in part, to his careless disposition. Under date of March, 1881, he wrote to a friend: "I have been solicited repeatedly by Eastern publishers; never but twice, that I remember, by Western publishers." In the same letter, alluding to the volumes he wrote, and magazines he edited, he says: "I do not possess a copy of any one of them."

Returning to the ambitious and sentimental period of Gallagher's career, we find that he was admired for his handsome looks. One of his cotemporaries wrote: "He has a manly figure, tall and well proportioned, with a lofty and somewhat haughty carriage. His complexion is

very fair and ruddy; his face exhibits a remarkably youthful appearance, as if but nineteen and not twenty-eight years had passed over his head. In conversation, he is animated and energetic, evincing the man of quick sensibility, the bold thinker, the acute critic and severe satirist. His eyes are lively and of a piercing blue. His forehead is fair and open, denoting intellectual strength, with softened outlines, and is the index of the graceful character of his mind." The allusion in this description to Gallagher's "haughty carriage," recalls the fact that the boys in the printing office used to call him William "Dignity" Gallagher.

Neither his handsome person, nor his versatile talents brought much hard cash. Deprived of the salary which he had received as editor of the meager *Mirror*, the poet found himself in the unpoetical condition of a man with a wife to support on no income whatever. He wrote to Otway Curry: "I must do something to raise a little money, for I am almost too badly clad to appear in the street." Grasping at an invisible straw, he issued a prospectus for a weekly paper, *The Cincinnati Spectator and Family News-Letter*, but the name was all of the paper that ever appeared. However, in June, 1836, Messrs. Smith and Day projected a *Western Literary Journal and Monthly Review*, and Gallagher was called to edit it. Mark the western tone and confident air of this passage from the opening number: "Let us, who are in the enjoyment of a triune youthfulness, being young as a people, young in years, and young as a literary community, endeavor to approach the Fathers of English Poetry. Let us discard the affectation of parlor prettiness, wax-work niceties and milliner-like conceits. Let us turn our lady-pegasus out to pasture, and mount coursers of speed and mettle. Let us give over our pacing and ambling, and dash off with a free rein." To these imperative appeals the readers of the *Journal* were probably insensible; at any rate they did not pay liberally for such exhortation, and the starving editor's starving periodical gave up the

ghost, aged one year. The lively ghost flew to Louisville and was there re-embodied, being merged in the *Western Monthly Magazine*, which Judge Hall sold to James B. Marshall in 1836. The combined publication forming the *Western Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal* was to be issued simultaneously from Cincinnati and Louisville. Gallagher was employed to edit it, and he entered upon this new labor with unflagging zeal. The *Western Academician*, (think of a Western Academician in 1837,) says of this new venture: "It is replete with good articles." Notwithstanding its exuberance of merit, the journal expired with the issue of the fifth number, perhaps being too good to live, and William D. Gallagher was left once more a man without a periodical. But now a star of hope appeared in the north. John M. Gallagher, the poet's youngest brother, had become manager of the *Ohio State Journal*, at Columbus, Ohio, and he invited William to assist him. Such an opportunity was not to be slighted, and we may imagine the strong Whig, who had begun his journalistic labors as editor of the Clay newspaper at Xenia, now using the language of Leigh Hunt:

> "I yield, I yield.—Once more I turn to you,
> Harsh politics! and once more bid adieu
> To the soft dreaming of the Muses' bowers."

Gallagher removed with his family to Columbus, and entered upon editorial duties, also writing political letters from the Capital for the *Cincinnati Gazette* under the signature of "Probus." But his connection with the *State Journal* was of short duration. Standing by his convictions with his usual stubbornness he opposed, editorially, the publication of the laws in the German language and the teaching of any foreign language in the public schools. Finding that his views were unpopular and injurious to the business interests of the paper, he chose to resign rather than suppress his honest opinions.

Before withdrawing from the *Journal* he projected what proved to be his most important enterprise in litera-

ture, a magazine named "*The Hesperian.*" This was a monthly miscellany of general literature. The first number came out in May, 1838. Otway Curry assisted in editing the first volume. Two volumes were published at Columbus,—the third and last at Cincinnati. The senior editor, in his opening "Budget," confesses that his past ten years' exertions in behalf of literature "have been fruitless to himself of everything but experience," yet he finds courage to make one more attempt, "because he loves the pursuit,—because he thinks he can be useful in it,—because he is convinced there is, throughout the whole West, a great demand and a growing necessity for labor in it,—and because he believes that under present auspices it can be made to yield at least a *quid pro quo.*"

The *Hesperian* was jealously Western, as its name sufficiently suggests, but it was by no means narrow, shallow, or provincial. Its watchwords were Freedom, Education, Manhood, Fair Play. The contents were wide-ranging—geographical, historical, biographical, political, poetical, agricultural, theological, romantic and fictitious. Among its contributors, were the Drakes, Shreve, Perkins, Neville, Prentice, W.G. Simms, S. P. Hildreth, C. P. Cranch, I. A. Jewett, A. Kinmont, R. Dale Owen, Jas. W. Ward, Mrs. Sigourney, Mrs. Lee Hentz, Amelia B. Welby, and many others worthy to hold a permanent place in literature. Gallagher himself wrote copiously and very ably for the *Hesperian.* In its pages appeared his most ambitious story, "The Dutchman's Daughter," which, though crude and ill-sustained as a whole, has descriptive passages that would grace the pen of Irving.

The *Hesperian* was transferred from Columbus to Cincinnati in April, 1839. The editor procured a room in the third story of a brick house on Third street, east of Main — a room ten by twelve, with a door and a single window. "And in this small place," writes he gaily to his wife, "Emma dear," on May Day, "the renowned editor of the *Hesperian* is to read, write, eat, drink, go to

bed, get up, and entertain his friends." To Curry he wrote, lugubriously quoting Mother Goose, "I have so many children I don't know what to do." Again to Mrs. Gallagher on May 15, "I enclose you three dollars, all the money I have, and I hope it will last you till I can get and furnish you some more." This period was the proverbial darkest hour just before daybreak. The "Probus" letters had made a favorable impression on Charles Hammond, the chief editor of the Cincinnati *Gazette*, and induced him to offer Gallagher an important position as his assistant. Hammond was at that time the most influential journalist in the country. He was an intimate adviser of Clay, and had been called, by Webster, the "greatest genius that ever wielded the political pen." Thomas Ewing had said of Hammond that he used a language as pure as that of Addison. It was no light honor to be called and chosen by so eminent a man. With the honor came also a liberal salary. "Emma" and the "so many children" were now well provided for. The *Hesperian* was discontinued and the duties of the new career were begun in the latter part of 1839, to be continued, with little interruption, for ten years. Mr. Gallagher at first attended mainly to the literary department of the paper, but after the death of Mr. Hammond in 1840, he did much political writing. He became more and more interested in State and national questions, and took an active part in party management. For many years he was Secretary of the Whig Committee for the First Congressional District of Ohio. In 1842 he was nominated candidate for the State legislature, but declined to run.

The love of literature continued to hold sway over him. In 1840 he planned a literary undertaking of praiseworthy character and generous scope, as may be gathered from the following letter to Otway Curry:

[*To Otway Curry, Esq., Marysville, Union County, Ohio.*]

CINCINNATI, Nov. 7, 1840.

MY DEAR CURRY—I thank you for your original contribu-

tion to the Poetical Volume, and shall insert it as the second selection from you, "The Goings Forth of God" being the first. It was not my original design to have admitted anything not before published, but Jones thought he could do better than he had yet done, and Shreve ditto; and, while I held their requests for the privilege of inserting an *original*, under advisement, along came your *voluntary*. This, as there was no impropriety in deviating from the first plan thus made, decided me. Perkins, I think, will have an original likewise; and, in the forewritten verses,[1] you have one of my own. I do not wish it known, however, that the volume contains *anything* specially prepared for it.

I had not room in my last letter to detail to you the whole of my design. The volume of "Selections from the Poetical Literature of the West" is but the first feature of it. My intention is to follow this up in regular order by three other volumes, of "Selections from the Polite Literature of the West," "Selections from the Pulpit Literature of the West," and "Selections from the Political Literature of the West." Don't wipe those old *specs* of yours so hard, now. I've been looking over the level *prairies* of these intellectual regions, and I find in them materials enough for all I have contemplated. The truth is, Curry, this Transmontane world is a most glorious one, and I can't help trying to do something for its literary character, engage in whatsoever else I may, and starve, as I fear I must at this. I suppose these several volumes will come out at intervals of from five to six months, till the whole shall have been published.

About your "Veiled Prophet," I feel some anxiety. Burton's new theater, I understand, has been open for a number of weeks, yet I hear nothing either of Jemmy Thorn or from him. The first one of our citizens whom I find starting for Philadelphia I shall get to call upon Burton and make personal inquiry, &c., with reference to it.

About that Congress of lunatics which you suggest: Perkins thinks well of it, Shreve thinks well of it, Curry thinks well of it and Gallagher thinks well of it; and each of these distinguished men, doubtless, will willingly meet, lunaticise and go home again. What further than this, while the matter is so entirely a new suggestion, can I

[1] A poem entitled "Little Children," enclosed in the letter to Curry.

say? Give us your plan, and if it be as good and feasible as I presume it is, you will find us readily and actively seconding your motion.

And now, my dear fellow, a word in your ear confidentially. I am very busy now-a-days, and should not therefore have replied to your last so promptly but that I want very much to be "astonished jist." So crack your whip, and let us know what that "something" is, about which you prate so bigly. Thine as ever,

W. D. GALLAGHER.

P. S.—Write me down, if you please, richer since day before yesterday, by another child, and poorer by what it will cost to keep it. This makes the fifth, all alive and kicking, and able to eat mush with the children of any Clodhopper in the land."

That Gallagher's inclinations kept pulling him towards literature for some years after he became a political editor, is evident from a breezy letter written to Curry in August, 1844:

"DEAR CURRY—Upon accurate calculation, the time of the rising of the new literary comet of the West has been determined. You and other benighted people in your region may look for a luminous streak in the Heavens at 9 h. 10 m. 11 sec. October 1, 1844. After this announcement, my dear fellow, can you remain idle? I hope not, for the sake of the new experiment, the credit of your name, and the honor of your friend, who pledged to Messrs. Judson and Hine an article from your pen for the first number, and probably one for the second, and another for the third. The work is to be gotten out in the handsomest style, and you will have the pleasure of appearing in good company. Lay aside your political pen, therefore, shut up your law books, mount Pegasus, or some comely prose nag, and away to the free fields! What do you say? Shall I have something from you to hand over by the 6th to 10th prox.? Don't make it later, for the first copy is now in hand, and they want to be out early. Think of the olden time—your first love—wipe your specks—stick in a Havana—hum a madrigal—and dash into the thing pell-mell. Let me hear from you at once."

The new "literary comet" thus announced was (pathetic repetition!) still another *Literary Journal and Monthly Review*, edited by L. A. Hine, and referred to by him some years later as "my first literary wreck." It was published at Nashville, Tennessee, and conducted nominally, by E. Z. C. Judson—"Ned Buntline."

In those years of prosperity and constant pen-wielding, Mr. Gallagher's muse was liberal. Then it was that the poet, caring more for the sentiment than the form of his utterance, dashed off the strong and fervent lyrics, by which he became really recognized as a man of original power. He sang the dignity of intrinsic manhood, the nobleness of honest labor, and the glory of human freedom. Much that he wrote was extremely radical; his poetry was tinctured with the gospel of Christian socialism, and the example he set was imitated by many other writers of verse.

"Be thou like the first Apostles—
Be thou like heroic Paul;
If a free thought seek expression,
Speak it boldly!—speak it all!

"Face thine enemies—accusers;
Scorn the prison, rack, or rod!
And, if thou hast truth to utter,
Speak! and leave the rest to God!"

Such lines as these, and as compose the poems "Truth and Freedom," "Conservatism," "The Laborer," "Radicalos," "The Artisan," "The New Age," "All Things Free," went to the brain and heart of many people; and it is not to be doubted that they exerted a deep and lasting influence. Of a more distinctly practical type were his melodious pieces describing the West and the life of the pioneer; and still more popular, in their day, were his songs, many of which were set to music and sung in thea-

ters and at the fireside. In 1845 was written his famous ballad, "The Spotted Fawn," which everybody knew by heart.

A man of Gallagher's principles could not be other than an opposer of slavery. When the office of the *Philanthropist*, the anti-slavery paper established in Cincinnati, by James G. Birney, was mobbed, and the press thrown into the Ohio river, Gallagher was one of the citizens who, meeting with Hammond, Chase and others, at the *Gazette* office, arranged for a public meeting to be held at the Court-house, for the purpose of sustaining free speech. Years afterwards, in 1848 probably, Gallagher's feeling on the slavery question became so positive that he felt it a political duty to withdraw from the *Gazette* in order to edit the *Daily Message*. "The most I remember about this paper is," so he wrote in 1884, "that I gave its editorial columns altogether too anti-slavery (not abolition) a tinge to make it acceptable to business men in Cincinnati, who had commenced transactions with business men South, and that soon after publishing the address of the first National Convention of the Anti-Slavery party of the United States, (which even the Cincinnati *Gazette* refused to publish), the paper was almost kicked out of the stores on the river tier of squares, and I made up my mind that I must leave the paper very soon or the time would not be long before it would leave me (and my wife and babies) without anything to eat. So I left it and went back to the *Gazette*."

While connected with the *Gazette*, Gallagher did much to encourage the literary effort in the Ohio Valley. It is interesting to learn that of the young writers whom he brought before the public, Murat Halstead is one. Mr. Halstead humorously says, "I was ruined by Mr. Gallagher; he accepted and published in the *Gazette* a story which I had written and carefully copied over three times."

Gallagher was twice elected President of the "Histori-

cal and Philosophical Society of Ohio." The sixty-second anniversary of the settlement of Ohio was commemorated by the society on April 8, 1850, when the president delivered a discourse full of information and vigorous thought, on the "Progress in the Northwest." This address was published by W. H. Derby, and copies of it are now much sought after.

The year 1850 marks the beginning of a new line of experiences for Mr. Gallagher. His experiments in literary journalism ended with the *Hesperian*. His ten years' editorial service on the *Gazette* came to a close, for reasons which we give in his own written words:

"While I was connected with Judge Wright and L. C, Turner, in the editorship of the Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*. 'Tom' Corwin was appointed to the head of the Treasury department at Washington, and immediately offered me the place of private secretary, which I was urged to accept. This, I believe, was in the year 1850. I was what I considered *in advance* of both Wright and Turner, in relation to sundry questions of public and party nature, and on several occasions had felt it my duty to *commit* the paper, much to Wright's dissatisfaction. Finally a counting-room consultation was determined upon, and the L'Hommedieus were called into the editorial room. Stephen, the elder brother, sympathized with me from *principle*. Richard, the younger, agreed with Wright, as he said, from *policy*. 'What, Judge,' Stephen after a while inquired, 'is Gallagher's besetting sin in editorial matters?' 'Why,' promptly replied the Judge, without any exhibition of ill-nature, 'he is forever treading upon somebody's toes—and causing dissatisfaction, in the party as well as among business men.' Until this I had said nothing, but now I quickly responded, 'That, gentlemen, will never be a cause of complaint against Judge Wright —because he is forever *behind* the life and soul of his party, or at the best, *stumbling against somebody's heels*.' There was an instantaneous pause, when Stephen left and

beckoned me out of the room. I followed him, and much to his dissatisfaction, notified him that I should withdraw from the *Gazette* and accept Mr. Corwin's offer."

Soon after going to Washington and entering upon the discharge of his duties in the Treasury department, the United States Senate called upon the Secretary for a report upon the merchant marine, internal and coastwise Reliable materials for such a report were not at hand, and Gallagher, having the reputation for ability to "hold his tongue," was directed to proceed to the various interior customs districts of the United States and collect information in regard to the revenue, and Edward D. Mansfield was appointed to proceed upon similar business to the districts upon the Atlantic seacoast. All the materials in, Gallagher drew up the report, which was much commended in the department.

This over, he was immediately dispatched to the city of New York for a million of dollars in gold, out of the sub-treasury, with which he was instructed to proceed to New Orleans, by sea, and to deposit with the United States treasury in that city. This was to be a *secret* removal of gold, required in the settlement of Mexican claims. The specie was quietly conveyed to the steamship Georgia, of the Howland and Aspinwall line, and placed in a chest under the floor of the ladies' cabin before any passengers were received on board. Besides Mr. Gallagher, the captain and the purser were the only souls on the ship who were aware that it bore golden freight. The voyage was in mid-winter; the weather proved stormy.

Key West was reached without accident, but within an hour after the voyage was resumed from that point the ship struck a rock. By skillful piloting, the rock was cleared; and, after a much longer than average trip, New Orleans was finally reached on a Sunday morning. As soon as the passengers were ashore, the gold was loaded in a wagon, and hauled to the office of the Assistant United States Treasurer, where Gallagher had it securely

placed under lock. With the key in his pocket, he went to the St. Charles Hotel and got breakfast. That over, he proceeded to the telegraph office, and sent the following dispatch: "Hon. Thomas Corwin, Secretary of the Treasury, Washington. All Right. W. D. Gallagher, New Orleans." Returning to Washington, Gallagher resumed his labors as private secretary. One day he found among the papers which it was his duty to examine a letter signed by some of his old Cincinnati friends, suggesting that an extra compensation of not less than $1,000 should be given him as an appropriate acknowledgement of his general services to the Whig party and to the government. He showed the letter to another officer of the department, who was pleased with it, saying: "There is precedent enough for such extra compensation for similar services, and it is all right — but do you think the Secretary will consent to it." "I don't think he will ever have an opportunity to consent to it," Gallagher replied, and threw the letter into the grate and burned it up. "You ought not to have done that, Gallagher," remarked Mr. H—, "but—" "Perhaps not; but no personal friends of mine shall ever be tempted by other personal friends to do anything for me like that proposed." Within an hour Mr. Corwin came back to the department from a visit to the President. Mr. H—, good-naturedly, mentioned the matter to him, whereupon he sent, by messenger, a request that Gallagher would step into his room. When the latter presented himself, Corwin, with a very solemn expression upon his face, said, not angrily, but with sternness in his tone, "Gallagher, are you in the habit, as my private secretary, of destroying such of my private letters as you happen not to like?" "Governor, you have no idea that I could do anything of the sort. I destroyed one such letter a while ago, which concerned *me* more than it did you, and which, though meant as an act of friendship, ought not to have been written without my knowledge and consent. But I

suppose you know all about it." The expression on Corwin's face at once relaxed, as he continued, "I wonder if —— and —— really supposed I would use the public money in that way. If they did, they were most damnably mistaken."

In the summer of 1852, Gallagher had an opportunity of going into the New York *Tribune* with Horace Greeley; and another of taking a one-half interest in the Cincinnati *Commercial*, then controlled by his friend M. D. Potter. He was advised and urged by such old anti-slavery friends as Gamaliel Bailey, Thomas H. Shreve, Noble Butler, and others, in Washington, Cincinnati, and Louisville to purchase half the stock of the Louisville *Daily Courier*, and to assume the editorship of that paper, which was to be a Southern organ for the advocacy of Corwin's nomination to the presidency. After long consideration, a decision was reached in favor of the *Courier*, and Gallagher returned to the West with his family, arriving at Louisville the first day of January, 1853. Nearly thirty years afterwards he wrote, "My connection with the *Courier* proved to be an unfortunate one. There was little sympathy with my editorial tone and teachings, either in Louisville or throughout Kentucky. I worked hard, and lost money. So in 1854 I sold my interest in the concern, and withdrew from the paper — having been stigmatized again and again, in Southern and Southwestern localities, as an abolition adventurer on the wrong side of the Ohio river, as former president of the underground railroad through Ohio for runaway slaves, etc., etc." Personal animosity was inflamed against the unpopular editor from his boldly attacking John J. Crittenden for consenting to defend Matt. Ward, who killed the young teacher, Butler, in his own school-room. Young Butler was a brother of Noble Butler, one of Gallagher's dearest friends.

Even George D. Prentice (*et tu Brute!*) joined in the hue and cry against the *Courier* editor, partly because Gallagher was an Irish anti-know-nothing, but mainly on the

sore question of slavery. Prentice came up to Cincinnati and spent several days looking through the files of the *Gazette* to find in Gallagher's editorials abolition sentiments that might be used against him in Louisville. An article appeared in the *Journal* branding Gallagher with the crime of managing the underground railroad. This direct and personal attack roused the Celtic resentment of its subject, and he replied in the editorial columns of the *Courier*, over his signature, denying the allegation, and closed his card by denouncing the author of the calumny as "a scoundrel and liar." He had caught the spirit of personal journalism. The consequences were, if not dramatic, at least theatrical.

Upon a day the Louisville train brings to Pewee Valley, in Oldham county, where Mr. Gallagher had bought a little farm, a military gentleman of chivalrous appearance, who inquires the way from the station to Fern Rock Cottage. Finding the house, he knocks, and is admitted to the parlor by a colored servant. The master of the house is indisposed, is resting upon his bed, but clothed and in his right mind, and able to receive his visitor. The military gentleman will wait. To him presently enters William "Dignity" Gallagher, who, recognizing Colonel Churchill, cordially greets him, and asks his pleasure. The Colonel, with equal politeness, takes from his pocket a letter, which he hands to the convalescent editor. The missive is opened, and it proves to be a challenge from the proprietor of the Louisville *Journal*. Gallagher reads, tears the communication into a handful of bits, and throws the fragments on the floor. "Colonel Churchill, tell Mr. Prentice *that* is my answer to his foolish challenge."

Free once more, and now finally, from political journalism, Gallagher began to plant orchards, earning bread and butter for the time by editing an agricultural paper, the *Western Farmer's Journal*, and by writing for the *Columbian and Great West*, a Cincinnati paper, published by his

friend W. B. Shattuc. He also contributed poems to the *National Era*, edited by Dr. Bailey. With wonderful energy, he set about organizing industrial and educational institutions. He established a Kentucky Mechanics' Institute, a Kentucky State Agricultural Society, and was instrumental in forming the Southwestern Agricultural Society, of which he was made Secretary. In the way of useful literature, he wrote a prize essay on "Fruit Culture in the Ohio Valley;" and prepared materials for a social and statistical view of the Mississippi Valley.

Pewee Valley (at first named Pewee's Nest by Noble Butler, from the circumstance that when locating a building site there he wrote letters in a ruined cabin in which the pewees had built) is a beautiful village, on the Louisville & Nashville Railroad, about sixteen miles east of Louisville. It became a chosen resort of people of culture and taste. There lived Edwin Bryant, who had been the Alcalde of San Francisco in the gold-seeking days; Noble Butler, the educator, resided there; the wealthy and accomplished Warfield family made their refined and hospitable home at Pewee Valley. Mr. Gallagher's house, a rambling frame cottage, covered with American ivy, was built in the midst of great forest trees—beech, oak, maple, poplar, and a newer growth of sassafras, dogwood, black-haw, and evergreens. Gray squirrels barked and skipped about the door-yard, and the cat bird, the red bird and the unceremonious blue jay came near the porches for their daily bread.

Mr. Gallagher greatly enjoyed the picturesque surroundings, and the congenial society of Pewee Valley. Being of a generous and friendly disposition he was liked by all who knew him. Western literary people were especially attached to him. His correspondence with that class was extensive. The following letter may stand as a fair representative of the many that were sent him. It was written from New York, nearly thirty years ago, by one, who,

at that time, was regarded as the coming man in literature, Mr. William Ross Wallace.

[*William Ross Wallace to W. D. Gallagher.*]

"N. Y., August 17, 1860.

"My Dear Old Friend:—Your most kind and welcome letter came to hand several days since; and I have delayed an answer until I could read your lady friend's novel. This I have done with very great interest, as it is brimful of genius and a most peculiar, startlingly original power. Mrs. Warfield is certainly endowed with great talent and moral force. Her style is rich, yet chaste — full of a mature and lasting splendor. I should think that this Romance will place her, at a bound, at the head of our female authors — while she will compare favorably with the masculine. Of course, I will do all in my power in the way of newspaper notices; although the work needs no bolstering. I am very glad, my dear friend, that you like my poems — as it is pleasant to be admired by those whom we admire.

"Do send me a copy of your wood-thrush-note when it rings, at last, through the grand old woods. I hope to publish soon a long national poem, entitled "Chants in America" — devoted to our glorious scenery and deeds. I take a motto from yourself for the first part. Do you ever see Noble Butler? and Mr. Bryant? Mr. Fosdick told me that you were all neighbors. I have dear memories of both B's.

"I shall publish a notice of Mrs. W.'s great novel in a few days, and send you a copy of the paper containing it.

"Please let me know when you receive this, and believe me to be yours affectionately,

"William Ross Wallace.

"Wm. D. Gallagher, Esq."

The novel here referred to was "The Household of Bouverie," published in 1860 by J. C. Derby, and by him described as a "wonderful romance."[1]

Busied with the labors of peace, Gallagher little anticipated how soon he was to assume important duties of war

[1] Fifty Years Among Authors, Books and Publishers. J. C. Derby, 1884.

not in the capacity of a military man, but as a civil officer of the government, which he had served so faithfully before. A new President of the United States was to be chosen. He attended several political conventions—one State convention—was a delegate from Kentucky to the National convention at Chicago, in 1860, and was made somewhat conspicuous there by a response which he gave in reply to an address of welcome. Though his personal preference was for Mr. Chase, he went with the current for "Old Abe," working hard and voting for his nomination, against that of William H. Seward; and was one of those who carried the news to Springfield. In these and other public ways, he rendered himself so objectionable to the great mass of the people in his neighborhood, who were opposed to the election of Mr. Lincoln, that a public meeting was called and held within a mile of his house, for the purpose of giving him notice to leave the State. The situation was now dramatic in earnest, and might have become tragic, had it not been for the personal friendship of some of his political opposers. On the day of the threatened violence, Mr. Gallagher had intended to go from his home to Cincinnati. At Pewee Station, his friend, Mr. Haldeman, called out: "Gallagher, have you seen Dr. Bell?" "No." "He says they are going to mob you; there is a crowd at Beard's Station, and they swear you must leave the State." Dr. Bell came up and advised Gallagher to go on to Cincinnati. "No, gentlemen; if violence is meditated, my family are the first consideration, and home is the place for me. Mr. Crow"—this to the station keeper—"let it be known that I am at home." Haldeman forced into Gallagher's hand a navy revolver, though the poet had never fired a pistol in his life; another political enemy, but personal friend, gave him a big bowie-knife, and thus grimly over-armed he returned to Fern Rock, to the amazement of his wife and daughters.

The meeting at Beard's Station was a dangerous one, but Gallagher's rebel neighbors, with warm respect for the

man and chivalrous regard for fair play, demanded a hearing. A stalwart young mechanic took upon himself to champion the cause of free opinion. "I hate Gallagher's politics as much as any of you," said this gallant Kentuckian to the crowd, "but he has as good a right to his ideas as we have to ours, and"—with a string of terrible oaths—"whoever tries to lay a hand on him, or to give him an order to leave the State, must first pass over my dead body." The notice was not served; but after hours of talk, the assemblage contented itself with providing for the appointment of a "vigilance committee" for the neighborhood and dispersed. The excitement died away, and the Gallagher family lived in comparative safety; the stars and stripes floated above the roof of Fern Rock Cottage during the six gloomy years of the war.

When Mr. Chase was made Secretary of the Treasury, Gallagher was invited to accept the same position under him that he had held under Mr. Corwin. As the war went on, it became necessary for the government to appoint a special Collector of Customs for the ports of delivery in the interior, on the Mississippi river and elsewhere. Mr. Lincoln selected Gallagher for this important office. He was also made special commercial agent for the upper Mississippi Valley. By his vigilance, provisions and stores, to the value of millions, intended for the aid and comfort of the confederates, were intercepted and saved to the Union.

In the summer of 1863, he was appointed to the office of Surveyor of Customs in Louisville, and at the close of the war he was made Pension Agent. His public duties were all discharged punctually and with the strictest integrity. He made no money out of his country's misfortunes.

In the midst of official labor he found time and inspiration for the occasional use of his good goose-quill, (for he never uses a steel pen,) and he produced several stirring poems that did better work than many bullets. Chief of these were the patriotic ballad "Grandpa Nathan," and

the timely lyrics "Move on the Columns" and "The President's Gun," the last a poem on the emancipation proclamation.

The echoes of battle died away and Mr. Gallagher returned to his quiet farm, planted flowers, made rockeries, and planned new buildings. He resumed the useful pen, writing masterly communications for the "Louisville and Ohio Valley Manufacturer and Merchant." One of his articles is on "Cotton and Tobacco," another on "Our Commercial Exchanges." Perhaps his ablest statistical discourse is one published in pamphlet form in 1879, entitled "The Area of Subsistence, and its Natural Outlet to the Ocean and the World," a discussion of the resources of the great Southwest, and a counterpart to his address of 1850 on the Northwest.

In the reaction that followed the seeming prosperity stimulated by the war, Mr. Gallagher suffered financially, as did thousands of others. His property at Pewee Valley depreciated and he also lost money by unfortunate investments. Driven by necessity he earned his living by spending patient hours at the clerical desk as salaried secretary of the "Kentucky Land Company." In 1881, he was working, as he expressed it, "like a beaver," a statement that recalls his brother's complaint more than sixty years before, that Billy was toiling "like a nigger."

If ever a citizen was entitled to government appointment on the score of faithful public service, Gallagher was. Several of his political friends presented his claims to the President and the Secretary of the Interior, in 1871. His endorsers in Kentucky were such men as B. H. Bristow, G. C. Wharton and John M. Harlan. Hon. Charles P. James wrote to President Hayes from Washington, "I am able to say that his reputation, whether as an officer or business man, has been absolutely without imputation of wrong or neglect. He has always been known as a remarkably hard worker, and as a man of great moral courage." A letter written by General R. C. Schenck said

of Gallagher, "He can bring to the public service, high character, undoubted integrity, and great literary ability." On the back of this is written, with bold emphasis, "I concur in the foregoing recommendation. J. A. Garfield." It was Guiteau's bullet that prevented Gallagher from receiving an appointment from the man of Mentor.

It is painful to record that, in 1882, lured by promises and prodded by need, the proud poet went to Washington in the forlorn hope of employment by the government. On August 21, his seventy-fourth birthday, he wrote from Washington to his children at Louisville, the following brave verses, which, whatever be their literary short-comings, have a merit of courage, patience, and resignation that is deeply touching. The lack of poetry in the lines is more than made up by the unconscious pathos:

"So you! so each and all who bear
My name!—so all my blood who share!
Come good, come ill—come weal, come woe—
No murmurs breathe, no faintings know!
If dark the day, or if you bask
In sunshine, still pursue your task.
If hard the labor, more the need
Of perseverance, trial, heed.
And if, when sets the cheerful sun
Your task shall not be wholly done,
Your hopes fulfilled, your wants supplied,
Your aspirations satisfied,
Feel not discomfited, depressed,
But calmly seek your needed rest,
And brace you for the further fray,
As soon as opes the coming day—
Remembering still, day out and in,
They win who work, they work who win."

Mrs. Emma Adamson Gallagher, the poet's wife, died at Pewee Valley, December 26, 1867, of heart disease. Suddenly stricken, she fell to the floor, and soon afterwards expired. She bore to her husband nine children, of whom one son, Edward, and three daughters, Jane, Emma and Fanny, are living.

Incidental mention is made, in the foregoing narrative, of Mr. Gallagher's ringing lyrics of reform, and his songs celebrating the days of the pioneer. These made their author famous half a century ago, and were praised in the magazines of Percival, Sprague, Brainard, and James F. Clarke. Fine and forcible as these eloquent and melodious pieces are, they are surpassed in poetical merit by the author's delicate lyrics descriptive of nature, such as his poems on "May" and on "August," and his lines to "The Cardinal Bird." These have been reprinted so often that they are accessible to any reader who has access to a general library. But there is a little poem, written by Mr. Gallagher in 1852, which has never appeared in any volume, and which has qualities of such exquisite sweetness and tenderness, and open-hearted spontaneity, that I quote it here:

THE BROWN THRUSH.

Brown-mantled bird that in the dim old forest
Which stands far-spreading in my own loved West,
At dewy eve and purple morn outpourest
The sweet, wild melodies that thrill thy breast,—
How like to thine were my young heart's libations,
Poured daily to the giver of all good!
How like our love and simple ministrations
At God's green altars in the deep and hallowed wood

We trilled our morn and evening songs together,
And twittered 'neath green leaves at sultry noon;
We kept like silence in ungenial weather,
And never knew blue skies come back too soon.
We sang not for the world; we sang not even
For those we loved; we could not help but sing,—
There was such beauty in the earth and heaven,
Such music in our hearts, such joy in everything!

Wild warbler of the woods! I hear thee only
At intervals of weary seasons now;
Yet while through dusty streets I hasten, lonely
And sad at heart, with cares upon my brow,
There comes from the green aisle of the old forest
A gushing melody of other days—
And I again am with thee, where thou pourest
In gladness unto God the measure of thy praise.

The brief preface to Mr. Gallagher's "Miami Woods and Other Poems," published in Cincinnati in 1881, tells us that nearly the entire contents of the volume, excepting the miscellaneous poems, "appear in print now for the first time, though written at various periods between twenty-five and forty-two years ago." A subsequent volume, in which will be embraced "The Ancient People," "Ballads of the Border," "Civile Bellum," was promised, but it will probably never appear, for the first volume was not a financial success. The book, a handsome octavo of 264 pages, has its contents divided into five sections: I, Miami Woods; II, A Golden Wedding; III, In Exaltis; IV, Life Pictures; V, Miscellaneous.

"Miami Woods" is a long poem, divided into seven parts, corresponding to seven periods in which it was composed. The first part was written in 1839, the seventh in 1856. The poem is essentially descriptive, though it abounds in meditations and reflections on various subjects — political, social, moral, religious and philosophical. This didactic quality reminds the reader of Wordsworth's "Excursion."

Bryant has described many features of the American landscape with charming fidelity, yet with something of photographic coldness. Gallagher's verse paints the forest and field with Nature's own color, and glows with the warmth of human love and joy. "Miami Woods" is a sort of Thompson's "Seasons," adapted to the Ohio Valley. J. J. Piatt, in his poems, gives many touches of inimitable natural description, and his "Penciled Fly Leaves" is a gallery of delicate etchings of Western scenery. Mr. Gallagher has painted a true and quite complete panorama of the changing year in Western woods. It can be said, in the words of Pope, that he made the groves

"Live in description and look green in song."

Whether his book will be sought in the future for its

literary value or not, there can be no doubt that it will be recognized as the historical daguerreotype gallery of woodland scenery now forever passed away.

Pleasing as are the fine descriptive passages in this poem, they do not take hold of the heart, as does the simple, pathetic narrative, that runs, like an artery of life-blood, through the entire work. Never was sweeter or sadder story told in prose or verse. The mournful tenderness of it disarms criticism and brings tears to the eyes. It is the record of a father's love for a beautiful, sympathetic child — a daughter — who was first stricken with loss of reason, and then with death. To the memory of this darling child the volume is dedicated, most touchingly.

I give some passages from "Miami Woods," which, taken together, convey, though imperfectly, an idea of the poem, and especially of the narrative portion of it, to which attaches the greatest human interest:

"I am here—
The same, yet not the same, as when at first,
In mild, reflective mood, and artless verse,
I sang thy charms, and lifted from their midst
My heart to God. The same, yet not the same;
For on the dial-plate of Life, since then,
The shadow of my quickly rounding years
Has numbered twelve. And I have wandered far,
And much have seen of glory and of grief;
And much have known of pleasure and of pain;
And much have thought of human pomp and pride,
Which are the sorriest and baldest things
The indulgent eye of Heaven looks down upon."

* * * * * * *

"The same, yet not the same:
'Twas Autumn then in thy deep heart, which mourn'd
Its Summer glories, passing fast away;
But in my own, perpetual fountains played,
And to perpetual hopes that cluster there,
Gave brightest bloom. But Autumn now has come
To *my* bereaved heart, which inly moans
For withered hopes and blighted flowers of love,
While thine is full of gushing melodies,
And sunnier slopes, and green and blooming nooks.

* * * * * * *

"Far away
The alder-thicket robed in brightest bloom,
Is shining like a sunlit cloud at rest;
Nearer, the brier-roses load the air
With sweetness; and where yon half-hidden fence
And topping cabin mark the Pioneer's
First habitation in the wilderness.
The gay bignonia to the ridge-pole climbs,
The yellow willow spreads its generous shade
Around the cool spring's margin, and the old
And bent catalpa waves its fan-like leaves
And lifts its milk-white blossoms, beautiful!"

* * * * * *

"A summer's day
She gathered flowers, and mock'd the birds, and blew
The time o' the day on greybeard dandelions.
When eve approached, we hither came, and paused,
Struck with the various beauty of the scene.
She sat beside me on this grassy knoll,
That looks out on it all, and gazed and gazed
Until the mind, so darkened now, was filled
With light from heaven, and love for earth, and joy
That in such pleasant places God had cast
Our lot. We lingered till the sun went down,
Then, silent as the shadows of the night
That gathered round us, took our homeward way.

* * * * * * *

"Oh, from this scene the bloom hath faded now;
And that which was the soul of it to me,
The glory and the grace, sits far away,
Beneath the shadow of a sorrow big
With all that can affright or overwhelm —
My heart would break — my stricken heart would break,
Could I not pour upon the murmuring winds,
When thus it swells, the burden of its woe,
In words that soothe, how sad so e'er they be.

* * * * * * *

"Now from the stormy Huron's broad expanse,
From Mackinaw and from the Michigan,
Whose billows beat upon the sounding shores
And lash the surging pines, come sweeping down
Ice-making blasts, and raging sheets of snow;
The heavens grow darker daily; bleakest winds
Shriek through the naked woods; the robber owl
Hoots from his rocking citadel all night.

* * * * * * *

"I sing no more the passion and the pain
That here o'ercame me; the triumphant joy
With which, when last I bade these scenes farewell,
I went upon my way, all starred with light,
I sing no more forever. The sweet hope,
That like an angel sat beside my heart
And sang away its sorrow then, hath since
Gone down in desolation. That which was
The central harmony of all this song,
The beautiful young life that to each swell
And cadence gave the spirit that it hath,
It is no more a bodily presence here,
It is no more of earth; and now the last
Faint strain of this prolonged and fitful lay,
Which but for her and for the love she bore
These scenes, had known no second touch, must die
Into a murmurous sound—a sigh—a breath."

W. H. VENABLE.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 015 863 481 8